



Your Extension Insight

IHS Loan Repayment Program News and Information



Don't miss the
January 1
deadline for
priority
consideration!

Thank you for your service!

Thank you for your service with the Indian Health Service (IHS) Loan Repayment Program (LRP). Your efforts on behalf of the LRP have contributed to fulfilling the IHS mission: To raise the physical, mental, social and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest level.

Long-term relationships between you and your patients are critical for improving patient outcomes. Continuity of care is even more important within Indian health programs. By extending your service with the LRP, you can provide that vital continuity of care.

When you recommit to the LRP, the program will further invest in you with financial support to pay off your qualified health profession student loans. Your service as a proven health professional is a valuable contribution to the IHS.

The contract extension process is simple and straightforward, but it does involve some foresight for you to meet the January 1 deadline for priority consideration. This newsletter provides all the guidance you need to maximize your chances of securing an extension.

Contract Extension Basics

You must request an extension prior to January 1 of the year your LRP contract expires to further your clinical experience and continue to serve areas of critical need. If you miss the January 1 deadline, the LRP will consider your extension, but will not give it priority consideration.

Unlike your initial application, site scores do NOT factor into extension decisions.

You may apply for and receive multiple extensions, but your cumulative service obligation cannot exceed the number of years required to repay your total qualified debt.



Contract Extension Details

You can find instructions for extending your service contract on the [LRP website](#) and in your [LRP Recipient Handbook](#). You can also find updated policies and procedures regarding contract extensions in the [IHS Loan Repayment Program Policy and Procedure Clarifications](#) document. The LRP office will only mail hard copies of these documents by request.



Application Process

To receive priority consideration, submit your contract extension request by the January 1 deadline of the year your LRP contract expires. You should submit your request in writing to your LRP analyst via postal mail or email as early as possible, preferably up to nine months prior to January 1 of the final year of your service obligation.

Applying for Transfers

You may request a transfer to a new position or site when submitting your extension request. The best time to request a transfer is between funding periods. All transfers require LRP approval before you can change positions or move to a different site. Review the [IHS Loan Repayment Program Policy and Procedure Clarifications](#) document for information regarding transfers.

Selection Criteria for Funding

Your extension request will be considered if:

- The IHS determines that you satisfactorily completed your previous service obligation.
- You continue to provide full-time clinical services in your chosen health profession.
- An extension of your service continues to meet priority staffing needs of Indian health programs.

- You have qualified health profession student loans NOT paid for under your initial contract.
- You can provide official documentation from your lending institution(s) indicating that it applied maximum payments from your LRP award to your eligible outstanding debt during your service.
- LRP funds are available.

Service Obligation

For each year the LRP extends your contract, you must complete a one-year service obligation at the LRP-approved site indicated in your extension request, according to the terms outlined in the [LRP Recipient Handbook](#).

Contacts

Visit the [FAQ](#) page of the [LRP website](#) for answers to the most frequently asked questions about the IHS Loan Repayment Program.

If you're unable to locate an answer to your question on the LRP website, contact the appropriate analyst on the list below for questions about your specific discipline. For all other questions, contact the LRP office at (301) 443-3396.



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For more information about requesting an extension of your service contract, visit the [LRP website](#), where you will also find the latest information on priority health profession disciplines and any recent LRP updates.

Thank you again for your service. We hope that you consider extending your IHS Loan Repayment Program contract.